

**PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
STAFF REPORT**

May 20, 2010



RZ10-09: Highland Interests, Inc.

CASE DESCRIPTION: a request to change the zoning classification from Agricultural-Open District (A-O) to Residential District – 5000 (RD-5)

LOCATION: 16.85 acres of vacant land located north of a proposed northeastern extension of Harvey Mitchell School Drive, approximately 650 feet northeast from its intersection with Ambrose Drive in Bryan, Brazos County Texas

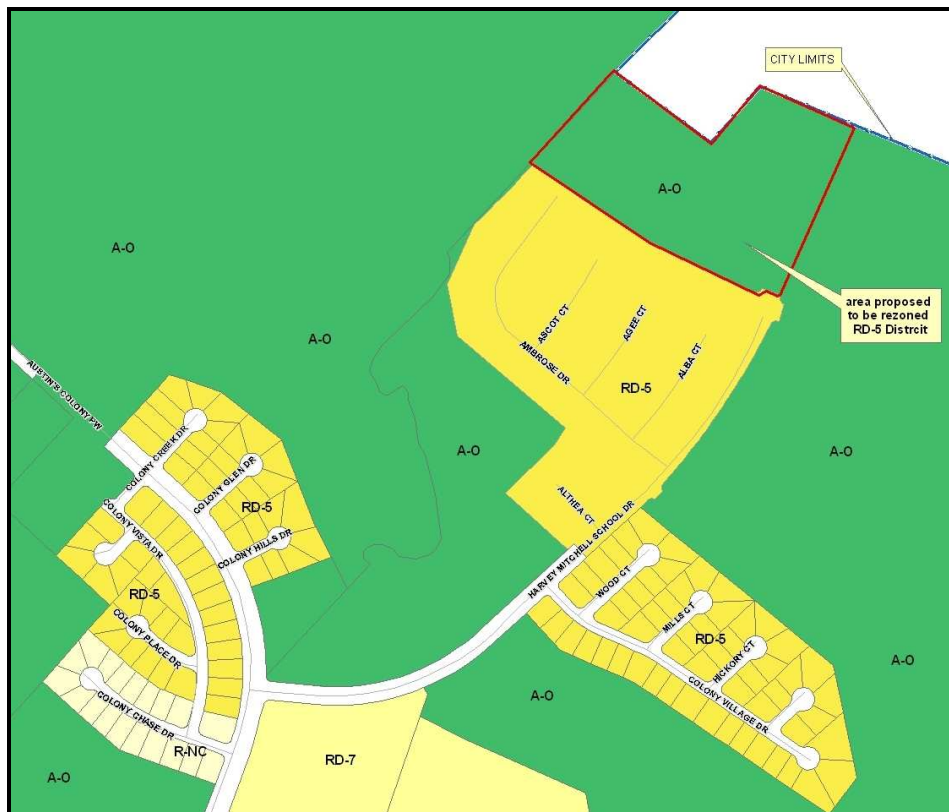
LEGAL DESCRIPTION: 16.85 acres of land out of John Austin League A-2

EXISTING LAND USE: vacant land

APPLICANT(S): Mark J. Carrabba, Vice President of Highland Interests, Inc.

STAFF CONTACT: Martin Zimmermann, Planning Administrator

SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends **approving** RD-5 zoning on these 16+ acres of land, as requested.



BACKGROUND:

The applicants, Highland Interests, Inc., are requesting to change the zoning classification from Agricultural-Open District (A-O) to Residential District – 5000 (RD-5) on 16+ acres of vacant land located north of a proposed northeastern extension of Harvey Mitchell School Drive, approximately 650 feet northeast from its intersection with Ambrose Drive. The applicants desire to develop this land with a residential subdivision, specifically, Phase 12 of the subdivision known as Austin's Colony. A master plan for Austin's Colony proposing a low-density residential development at this location was approved by the Planning and Zoning Commission on April 6, 2006.

The A-O zoning classification is intended to provide opportunities for development of low density, detached single-family residences on lots of at least one acre in a suburban or rural setting. This zoning classification is also intended to serve as a holding zone for vacant land areas annexed to the City as well as to protect areas that may be unsuitable for development and to preserve natural open space. The RD-5 zoning classification is intended to provide opportunities for development of detached dwellings on lots of at least 5,000 square feet in size.

RELATION TO BRYAN'S COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

The City of Bryan adopted a new Comprehensive Plan in January 2007. The plan includes policy recommendations related to the various physical development aspects of the community. These aspects are supported by a set of goals and objectives. The Comprehensive Plan suggests that low density residential should be located in areas that are protected from (but accessible to) the major roadway in close proximity to schools.

ANALYSIS:

In making its recommendation regarding a proposed zoning change, the Planning and Zoning Commission shall consider the following factors:

1. Whether the uses permitted by the proposed change will be appropriate in the immediate area concerned; relationship to general area and the City as a whole.

Staff believes that RD-5 zoning on these 16+ acres is appropriate at this particular location and is not only in accordance with land use recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan, but also the master plan for the Austin's Colony Subdivision. The master plan proposes more low-density residential developments on the east side of Carter's Creek in this vicinity. Staff believes that single-family residences at this location will promote orderly urban growth in close proximity to Harvey Mitchell Elementary School.

2. Whether the proposed change is in accord with any existing or proposed plans for providing public schools, streets, water supply, sanitary sewers, and other utilities to the area and shall note the findings.

Residential neighborhoods should be planned such that they form cohesive environments oriented toward elementary schools at their core. In this particular case, this proposed low-density residential subdivision is located about ¼-mile from Harvey Mitchell Elementary School and will have access to a collector street (Harvey Mitchell School Road). Any issues regarding utility capacity will be addressed at the time of development.

3. The amount of vacant land currently classified for similar development in the vicinity and elsewhere in the City, and any special circumstances which may make a substantial part of such vacant land unavailable for development.

The closest vacant land zoned for residential development is located a few hundred feet southwest from the subject property in the subdivision known as Austin's Colony – Phase 11. Staff believes that this zone change request, if approved, will not make land classified for similar development in the vicinity and elsewhere in the City unavailable for development.

4. The recent rate at which land is being developed in the same zoning classification as the request, particularly in the vicinity of the proposed change.

Staff contends that residential developments are developing at a moderate pace in this vicinity and elsewhere in the City.

5. How other areas designated for similar development will be, or are unlikely to be affected if the proposed amendment is approved, and whether such designation for other areas should be modified also.

If the proposed zone change was approved, staff believes there to be few, if any, effects on other areas designated for similar developments.

6. Any other factors affecting health, safety, morals, or general welfare.

Staff believes that RD-5 zoning at this location will have no adverse effects on nearby properties.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends **approving** RD-5 zoning on these 16+ acres of land, as requested.